



# Maricopa County

Department of Public Health

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Dear Colleagues,

This will be a much shorter but important update on the H1N1 flu vaccine supply. For all the past 5 updates as well as where your outpatient health care workers can go to get vaccine, go to: [http://www.maricopa.gov/Public\\_Health/HotTopics/h1n1flu/resources.aspx](http://www.maricopa.gov/Public_Health/HotTopics/h1n1flu/resources.aspx). Please note that we hope to get Walgreens online very soon to also offer vaccine to health care workers.

## The Current Epidemic and Vaccine Strategy

It appears that we're on the downside of the 2<sup>nd</sup> wave of the epidemic. Although I say this with the caveat that we continue to see severe cases and deaths reported everyday, which means we still need to keep our guard up and be vigilant in treatment of high risk patients. How fast it will continue to decrease, and whether we'll have pockets of resurgence here and there during that decrease is obviously unknown. What history tells us to expect, however, is that there will likely be a 3<sup>rd</sup> wave yet to come.

That's important. We still then have a chance to create enough "herd immunity," between those who have already had the infection and those we can vaccinate, to minimize or maybe even prevent that 3<sup>rd</sup> wave. Since there's still the chance that mutation of some of the virus could increase its virulence, we cannot pass up the opportunity to build that herd effect, and kids are the most important target group to do that.

In addition, there have been large outbreaks on college campuses in some places, especially those with on-campus housing, even as the rate of disease in the community falls. So that means that two important target groups at this point are kids and young adults, especially at ASU. And to have herd immunity in place before a resurgent 3<sup>rd</sup> wave, we need to finish those groups before they leave for winter break.

## Vaccine Supply

For the past 2 weeks, the amount of vaccine we were allowed to order was up a bit, as I described earlier. This week, however, our allocation slipped back down. Revised projections for the next two weeks are also lower. We are supposed to be able to order a much larger amount during the week of December 4, with expected delivery the week of December 11 or a little later.

That puts us in a real bind. We've only got ~5 weeks to finish schools, and only ~3 weeks realistically if we're going to hit the young adult population at ASU. We've got to finish these groups off as much as possible, and cannot wait any longer or it will be physically impossible to do the job before winter break.

That means that most of what we are able to order for the next couple of weeks will go toward that effort. Some of you have vaccine already allocated to you that is still in

transit, and you may get that next week. Some vaccine won't be appropriate for schools (the pediatric pre-filled syringes for 6-35 months of age). But otherwise, the vast majority of what we have will go toward school kids and ASU, and other residential college settings if we have any left. So use what you have on hand wisely.

A few weeks from now when the supply picks back up, we hope to be able to order a substantial amount for other settings and get back to supplying many of you. If we really do receive a large amount then, we'll finally be able to hold public clinic sites, although still for those at higher risk, by mid-December.

I wish I had better news, however if we're going to prevent a 3<sup>rd</sup> wave with the level of disease that we all just went through, we must be aggressive in our school strategy.

Thank you for your continued patience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob England, MD".

Bob England, MD, MPH  
Director  
Maricopa County Department of Public Health